

Haftarah - Parshat Balak (Micah 5:6 to 6:8)

based on the translations of

Robert Alter, Aryeh Kaplan, Stone Edition Tanach, JPS, Jerusalem Bible, New English Bible, New King James Bible  
modeled after the recording in *Navigating the Bible II*:

<https://bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=4&chapter=5&verse=6&portion=44>

5:6 [And then will be] | the remnant—[those who are left of Jacob]  
in the midst of many peoples like dew that comes [from YHWH],  
[like gentle rain] [upon the grass] [that does not put] hope in man, and that does not wait [for human beings].  
7 [And then will be] the remnant of Jacob [among the nations]—in the midst of many peoples—  
[like a lion] [among the beasts] of the forest, [like a young lion] [among flocks of sheep],  
[which wherever it goes], [as it passes through] it pounces and tears apart and there is no rescuer.  
8 May you lift up your hand [over your foes], [and all your enemies] [will be cut off].  
9 [It will happen] [on that day], [says YHWH], I will cut off your horses [from your midst],  
[and I will destroy] your chariots.  
10 [I will cut off] the cities [of your land], [and reduce to ruins] [all your fortresses].  
11 I will cut off sorceries [from your hand]. [Indeed the soothsayers] will no longer be with you.  
12 [And I will cut off] [your graven idols] [and your standing pillars] [from your midst].  
You will worship no longer the work of your own hands. \*reading `atsabeykha instead of `areykha (cities). Cf. Alter  
13 I will root out your Asherah trees [from your midst]. [And I will destroy] your icons\*.  
14 [And I will take action]: [in my great anger] [and in my great wrath],  
[I will wreak vengeance] [upon the nations]—[all the ones] that have not obeyed.

6:1 [Hear ye now] <sup>⠠</sup>that which YHWH <sup>⠠</sup>[is saying to you]:  
 Arise! [State your case] [before the mountains]; <sup>⠠</sup>let it be heard *by* the hills—[what you do say].  
 2 [Hear then], O mountains, [the grievance] of YHWH,  
 [eternal rocks], the foundations [of the earth].  
 [For indeed] a grievance has YHWH [with His people]. [With Israel] [He would contend].  
 3 [O My people], what have I done to you? [Indeed how] [have I tired you out]?  
 Testify [against Me].  
 4 For I [brought you out] from the land of Egypt. From the house of slavery, [I rescued you].  
 [And I sent out] [before you], Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.  
 5 [O My people], [recall now] [the plot that was devised] by Balak king of Moab,  
 and how he was answered by Balaam [the son of Beor],  
 [what God did from Shittim] to Gilgal, so that you would know the bounties of YHWH.  
 6 [With what] shall I approach YHWH [and bow before] the God [who is the Most High]?  
 [Shall I come before Him] [with burnt offerings];  
 [shall I appear with calves]—with yearling rams?  
 7 [Does it please] YHWH [to receive thousands] of rams, and myriad [rivers of oil]?  
 [Shall I give] my firstborn for my trespass—the fruit of my loins, for the sin of my soul (*nefesh*)?  
 8 [It was surely] [told to you], O man, [that which is good],  
 [and what YHWH]\* requires—[what He asks from you], [only to do this]:  
 to act with justice and [to love kindness], [end melody] and that humbly you should walk [with your God].

\*Some texts have *azla-geresh* instead of *gershayim* here

## Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh ( <i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
(Renew our days)	(She weeps bitterly).	(a fire-offering to God)

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “God” or “Adonai”.

*The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:*

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)  
 Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)  
 Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)  
 The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)  
 JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)  
 Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)  
 Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series  
 Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)  
 The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)  
 The New King James Bible (1982)